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ABSTRACT

This report is the product of 17 months of research, consultation, and discussions; and it presents the views of the Connecticut Governor's Commission on Quality and Integrated Education. Connecticut has long acknowledged an affirmative responsibility to desegregate the public schools and guarantee educational quality for all students. The Commission found that the goal of "quality and intergrated education" currently is blocked by increasing racial isolation (i.e., the majority of Connecticut's students remain isolated from daily educational contact with students of other races and ethnic groups). Following its research into the dimensions of racial isolation in education in Connecticut and nationally, the Commission developed the following six findings: (1) educational opportunity cannot be addressed in isolation and public policy should be linked in the cooperative enterprise of removing barriers to achievement and of promoting the common ground that strengthens all in society; (2) a quality education requires an integrated student body and faculty and a curriculum reflecting the heritage of many cultures; (3) every student can learn at high levels from a quality and integrated education; (4) a need exists for communities to appreciate and support public education, and for families and the community to involve themselves in the education of Connecticut's youth; (5) every educator must be trained to teach a diverse student population and use a curriculum that incorporates and honors diverse cultural and racial heritages; and (6) Connecticut needs to attract and employ minority educators. For each finding, the Commission established a goal, indicators of success, and recommendations for achieving the goal. The report discusses each finding separately. Appendix A reports on commission activities from September 20, 1989, through December 31, 1990. Appendix B summarizes a public opinion survey of 750 citizens. Appendix C presents a 38-item list of sources. (SLD)

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CROSSING THE BRIDGE TO EQUALITY AND EXCELLENCE

A VISION OF QUALITY AND INTEGRATED EDUCATION FOR CONNECTICUT

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The Report of the Governor's
Commission on Quality and Integrated Education
Hartford, Connecticut
December 1990

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LOWELL P. WEICKER JR
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT
06106

Greetings to the Citizens of the State of Connecticut:

The future economic and social health of our state depends on our joint actions in a number of critical areas. The vitality of the state education system, and the knowledge and skills of our students, are critical issues which need our attention, now and over the long term.

One of the challenges facing our state is the increasing racial isolation of students in many of the school districts. Over 80% of our minority students can be found in just seventeen school districts. Most of the school districts have minority populations below 5%. If our students are to be effective and productive members in a global economy, they must learn to work with people from many different cultures and backgrounds. The ideal for education in the 21st century is a rigorous program of quality educational instruction in an integrated environment.

A strong commitment to children, the real future of Connecticut, is one of the themes of my budget proposal for 1991-92. One area where I have proposed increasing state funds is for initiatives to promote voluntary integration in education. I am seeking an increase from $1 million to $3 million in the Interdistrict Cooperative Grant to continue Project Concern and to encourage interdistrict programs promoting racial, ethnic and economic integration.

The Connecticut State Board of Education and Commissioner Tirozzi have called on all of us, the citizens of Connecticut, to work together to give our students the opportunity to learn in a high-quality integrated school environment. I applaud them for their leadership in this area. I urge you to read this report and to reflect how we, as a State, can meet the challenge of ensuring a quality and integrated education for Connecticut's students in all of our towns.

I assure you I will.

Sincerely,

Lowell P. Weicker, Jr.
Governor

CROSSING THE BRIDGE TO EQUALITY AND EXCELLENCE:

A VISION OF QUALITY AND INTEGRATED EDUCATION FOR CONNECTICUT

The Report of the Governor's

Commission on Quality and Integrated Education

Hartford, Connecticut

December 1990

WILLIAM A. O'NEILL
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS
HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT

CELEBRATE CONNECTICUT 350 YEARS 1985-1986

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CONNECTICUT

The tradition of public education in Connecticut is a strong one. In the past decade we have made great strides at both the state and local level to improve our system. Time and again we, in Connecticut, have adopted new programs that have been held up as models of excellence across the nation. We can be proud of our commitment to improving the quality of education.

With the report of my Commission on Quality and Integrated Education, we have an opportunity to again lead the nation in developing innovative programs to address a difficult and complex problem. Many of our students are isolated in schools that are either largely middle class and white or largely poor and non-white. Many districts and states have struggled with the twin goals of quality and integration. Much has been done and much can be learned from successes and failures in other states. At the same time Connecticut's answers will be particular to Connecticut, reflecting our special circumstances, history and heritage.

I urge all citizens to take the opportunity to review this report. I also urge you to accept the challenge of the Commission to debate and discuss this report and to go forward in developing creative programs that will ensure a quality and integrated education for all of Connecticut's children.

Sincerely,

William A. O'Neill

WILLIAM A. O'NEILL
Governor

WILLIAM A. O'NEILL

Governor

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JAMES P. SANDLER

Co-chair

DAVID G. CARTER, SR.

Co-chair

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Governor's Commission
on
Quality and Integrated Education

David G. Carter, Sr.
Co-Chair

James P. Sandler
Co-Chair

December 31, 1990

The Honorable William A. O'Neill
Governor
State of Connecticut
Executive Chambers
State Capitol
210 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

Dear Governor O'Neill:

The members of the Commission on Quality and Integrated Education thank you for the opportunity to address and make recommendations concerning the effectiveness of public education in Connecticut. We are pleased to submit our final report to you. It is the culmination of 17 months of research, consultation and discussions with state and national education experts, Connecticut's citizens, students, teachers, administrators, public officials and state agency personnel.

The recommendations in this report respond to your charge to us to "develop specific recommendations for new and/or expanded programs that will promote voluntary and/or cooperative approaches to achieving quality integrated education throughout the state". They cite opportunities and pose challenges for the education profession and, more broadly, for all our citizens as we set out to ensure that our young learners benefit from the richness of the diversity among us. These recommendations encourage greater cooperation across school district lines and will surely require changes in curricula and in the way we prepare our teachers. But the Commission is convinced that Connecticut's people will respond eagerly and constructively to all of these opportunities and challenges.

A number of Commission members are of the opinion that voluntary approaches are unlikely to be adequate and have sought to have the report include mandates. Others believe that mandates are beyond the charge of the Commission or that mandatory approaches are not effective. We ask you and Governor-elect Weicker to recognize that strong arguments supporting both options have been advanced by Commission members and Connecticut citizens at public hearings held across the state. Despite this difference of opinion, all members agree that the unanimity of members in voting for this report represents a strong consensus that the issue requires prompt and positive action.

Commission members feel a sense of urgency to reduce racial and economic isolation, a problem the enormity of which grows alarmingly with every passing moment. Today's youngsters are critical to tomorrow's civilization, its social relationships and its work force, citizenship and leadership. Thus, educational quality is not just an issue for educators and parents. Economics, simple justice and the demands of modern society necessitate that we provide high-quality, integrated educational programs for all students. With the size of the labor pool diminishing, we cannot afford to undereducate any of our young people -- but we are. With our cities being more and more alienated, we cannot afford to leave their residents increasingly isolated -- but we are. We must take the lead in ensuring that today's young learn all of the skills, knowledge and attitudes necessary to become productive members of Connecticut's work force and our society as a whole. The alternative is an accelerating divisiveness, apathy, and anger that are dehumanizing, threatening and costly. We must act now.

Education cannot shoulder the burden of social change by itself. We now realize that no set of educational strategies can fully address the myriad social issues that produce inequality and undermine education. Substance abuse, hunger, parental neglect, crowded and substandard housing and inadequate employment opportunities disproportionately attack minority children in our state and divert them from educational opportunity. Unless other elements of society and other institutions actively share with education the responsibility for addressing and remedying these conditions, not even the best of strategic education plans can succeed.

This report is just a beginning. It focuses only on the role education has to play in the pursuit of quality and integrated learning. The time has come to enlist those other institutions we just mentioned. Accordingly, the Commission asks that the next Governor advance the work of this Commission into such related areas of concern as housing, human resources, income maintenance, and employment. If we refuse to face these issues now, they will become more severe threatening our economic and social well being.

The Commission recognizes that the state is confronting a serious budget problem, and the Commission acknowledges that, while some of its recommendations will not require any new money, others will. The fact that the Commission has not attached a dollar amount to each recommendation must not bar legislative consideration. We can think of no better investment than underwriting the opportunity for all our children to achieve to their full potential and to welcome and value diversity.

Finally, we gratefully thank the many individuals and institutions that supported our work with contributions of time, expertise and money, particularly The New Haven Foundation, The Hartford Foundation, Pequot Community Foundation, Bridgeport Area Foundation, and Fairfield County Cooperative Foundation. We also welcome the public reception of our work. Many of our fellow Connecticut citizens already recognize that the recommendations in this report point us toward the highest possible quality of public education and a reaffirmation of the value of diversity in our State.

Respectfully submitted,

David G. Carter
Co-Chair

Respectfully submitted,

James P. Sandler
Co-Chair

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Bob Englehart

PREFACE

Unlike those states blessed with abundant natural resources – silver, oil, coal, iron ore and gold – Connecticut has always depended directly for its welfare and prosperity on the industry and ingenuity of its people. Connecticut must, therefore, continually invest in its citizens in order to maintain and enhance its quality of life. More specifically, the executive and legislative branches of government, our educators, and all our people earn the greatest possible return on their investment by making those choices most certain to produce a better educated populace.

We must set basic standards, of course. But more importantly, we must expect and help our students to achieve, knowing as we do so that students become wise and productive citizens when they meet and understand and then value people from cultures, races and genders other than their own. Students benefit, and Connecticut benefits, from the richness of diversity.

The Governor's Commission on Quality and Integrated Education transmits this report fully aware that other commissions, committees, and reports precede us. Nevertheless, we consider this report fresh and imperative. It focuses on and calls attention to both a critical problem that threatens our state and a need that, if met, can sustain and nourish it: We must ensure quality and integrated education for all our young learners.

The Commission hopes that voluntary methods will enable all of Connecticut's public school students to receive a quality and integrated education. We feel the recommendations in our report should be enacted and that they then must be given time and resources to succeed.

We are also mindful that to the extent that the achievement of these educational goals does not take place, the futures of far too many of our children will continue to be at risk. We, therefore, suggest that there be a finite amount of time given to these recommendations to determine if they do succeed. If it is deemed that they don't, other approaches must then be considered.

We hope to see our report discussed and debated. But once the discussions cease, we expect our recommendations to generate action. Connecticut has the people and the good will to meet our explicit challenges. The question now before our state is this: Can we afford not to help our students reach their potential in life while learning to welcome diversity?

INTRODUCTION

The State of Connecticut has long acknowledged an affirmative responsibility to desegregate its public schools and to guarantee educational equality for all students. The state's history of affirmative achievement has appeared in the following instances.

(1) Since 1966, the state has provided both financial support and technical assistance for one of this country's first voluntary interdistrict transfer programs, Project Concern, which was designed to promote voluntary desegregation among schools in urban metropolitan areas.

(2) In 1969, the Connecticut General Assembly adopted legislation to address what it saw as growing racial isolation in some Connecticut districts. This law required the schools within a single district to be racially balanced. The racial balance regulations were adopted in 1979. Under the regulations, the proportion of minority students in any school must be within 25 percentage points, plus or minus, of the proportion of minority students in the district as a whole.

(3) Beginning in 1979, Connecticut's formula for financing public schools has taken into account the needs of urban school districts by including in the aid formula the number of children from low-income families. In 1989, a weighting for the number of students who score below the remedial standard on the Connecticut Mastery Test was added to the state's major school aid formula.

(4) Since 1970, the state has supported magnet schools and programs as a means for improving the overall quality of education while reducing racial isolation. This support includes technical assistance to intradistrict magnet schools. Recently, the legislature authorized special bond funding for the construction or renovation of buildings to house interdistrict magnet schools.

(5) In 1988, the State Department of Education issued a report on the status of racial isolation in the state. In response to this report and at the direction of the State Board of Education, the Department of Education prepared a second report recommending options for achieving quality and integrated education. This report outlined a number of steps the state could take to advance integration. One of these "next steps" suggested that the Governor establish a "blue ribbon" commission to recommend strategies for achieving voluntary interdistrict integration.

(6) Since 1988, the legislature has focused the competitive interdistrict cooperative grant program on educational programs that provide opportunities for integration, with over 100 districts participating. More recently, the competitive summer school grant program was revised to give special consideration to programs that promote multiracial and multicultural understanding.

The Governor's Commission on Quality and Integrated Education

The Governor's Commission on Quality and Integrated Education, appointed by Governor William A. O'Neill on September 20, 1989, represented still another affirmative step in Connecticut's efforts to integrate its public schools. The Commission – which is made up of citizens from across the state, including legislators, corporate and community leaders, a member of a local school board, parents, educators and scholars – came together to study the issue and develop creative ways to promote quality and integrated education in Connecticut. Specifically, the Governor charged the Commission to:

(1) review the demography of the State of Connecticut and the trends in and reasons for differences in the racial, ethnic and economic makeup of Connecticut's public schools;

(2) review programs that foster racial and economic integration in public schools, including magnet school programs, in Connecticut and other states, identifying their strengths and weaknesses;

(3) identify changes in the current school construction law and regulations that would foster integration;

(4) develop proposals to recruit and retain minorities in the teaching profession;

(5) develop proposals for both interdistrict and intradistrict programs to promote quality and integrated education; and

(6) review current state aid programs to ensure support for proposed integration programs.

Finally, the Governor asked the Commission to report its recommendations by December 31, 1990.

Defining Quality and Integrated Education

The Commission immediately faced the need to define "quality and integrated education". It found help in reports and studies on early desegregation efforts, but found as well that the earliest desegregation campaigns, which emphasized physical desegregation, sometimes failed to provide a quality and integrated education for all students. In addition, the Commission members agreed that what many observers characterized as second generation school desegregation plans, which focused on "equal treatment and equal access" within schools, also fell short of quality and integrated education. Ultimately, the Commission concluded that a "quality and integrated education" should expose students to an integrated student body and faculty and a curriculum that reflects the heritage of many cultures. It should also provide all students with equal opportunities to learn and to achieve equal educational outcomes. [1]

Growing Racial Isolation

From this definition, the Commission set out to determine whether Connecticut students have the opportunity to obtain a "quality and integrated education". The Commission soon found that the goal of "quality and integrated education" currently is blocked by increasing racial isolation.

The majority of Connecticut's students remain isolated from daily educational contact with students of other races and ethnic groups. Over 80 percent of the state's minority students cluster in just 16, or 10 percent, of the districts. Seven of these districts accommodate over 60 percent of our minority students while 140 other districts are more than 90 percent white.

When social class and income levels compound the factors of racial or ethnic difference, a bleak picture of inequity emerges. Most poor children live far away from rich children, and all too many of Connecticut's African-American, Hispanic, and recent immigrant children are poor. They are separated because of the inextricable relationship that generally exists in our society between race and family wealth. For the young people, separateness, for whatever reason, encourages suspicion and hostility based on appearances.

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[1] On these points, see *Resegregation of Public Schools: The Third Generation, A Report on the Condition of Desegregation in America's Public Schools,* the Network of Regional Desegregation Assistance Centers, June 1989, and "Desegregation: Can We Get There From Here", *Phi Delta Kappan,* September 1990.

From a national perspective, most African-Americans and Hispanic children live in the large urban districts, where they are heavily concentrated and face severe segregation and inequality. The trends are toward more and more severe racial and class isolation in inner-city schools.

From an educational perspective, this means that the metropolitan community is becoming a "house divided against itself", and one wonders whether it can endure permanently half minority and half white, half middle class and half poor, half connected to the growing sectors of knowledge and job opportunities and half struggling against high odds to teach students basic reading and mathematics skills, only to see terrifying percentages of them lost from a high school system that too often leads nowhere even for those who survive.

Racial isolation has increased and continues to increase in Connecticut. According to a study prepared for the Commission, the past five years have seen a significant increase in the percentage of minority students in the five major metropolitan areas studied: Bridgeport, New Haven, Bloomfield/Hartford, Norwalk/Stamford, New London and the towns nearby. Meanwhile, between 1984 and 1989, the number of white students declined sharply as a result of the "baby bust" generation of the 1970s. During the next ten years, the numbers of both white and minority students will almost certainly increase in absolute numbers while the percentage of minority students will increase somewhat, although less than in the previous five years.

In the five major metropolitan areas (urban center and surrounding communities) just mentioned, the percentage of minority students seems destined to remain stable for Grades K through 5 during the next ten years. In the middle grades, Bridgeport and Norwalk should remain stable with regard to the percentage of minority students, while the percentage of minority students will increase slightly in Hartford and New Haven. The New London area projects the greatest growth in the percentage of minority students in the middle grades.

Meanwhile, the effects of declining white enrollments on minority percentages will be seen at the high school level. The percentage of minority students in Grades 9 through 12 increased significantly between 1984 and 1989 and will continue to increase over the next ten years. The New Haven area will probably lead, increasing from 28.0 percent in 1989 to 35.2 percent in 1999. The Hartford area will increase from 27.4 percent minority in 1989 to 32.7 percent in 1999. Bridgeport will see a smaller increase, from 31.1 percent in 1989 to 33.8 percent in 1999.

The school districts in the rural areas of Connecticut currently accommodate few, if any, minority students, and they will see little, if any, increase over the next decade unless the trend is reversed.

Schools and school districts, however, are not the cause of increasing racial and other isolation in our state. The Commission cannot ignore the fact that such isolation, whatever its original causes, is now fundamentally imbedded in the larger issues of poverty and lack of opportunity in employment, housing, health and transportation which all aspects of our society have a shared responsibility to address.

Educational isolation certainly tends to reinforce the effects of inequity on the attitudes and achievement of our future citizens. But our children, schools and school districts cannot be expected alone to solve issues that adults remain unwilling to address meaningfully. Opportunity and integration are societal imperatives, not just imperatives for schools.

The Commission particularly associates racial and ethnic isolation with existing housing patterns, finding a significant relationship between the concentration of minority students and the occurrence of publicly assisted housing. When one compares the 14 communities with the highest percentages of minority students (all of them over 25 percent) with the 14 communities with the highest percentages of assisted housing, one finds 9 communities on both lists – an unsurprising correlation, given the current equation between minority status and low incomes. The 1988 report of the Blue Ribbon Housing Commission fully documented the need for more housing affordable to moderate- and low-income families, and this Commission notes that affordable housing in suburban and rural communities could increase the diversity of their student populations. In particular, affordable housing could help integrate schools in the outer suburbs and rural communities where interdistrict programs with urban schools now present long-distance transportation problems.

Although encouraged by Connecticut's new regional housing compacts, the Commission foresees that our society may not soon succeed in undoing all the consequences of poverty and inequity. The Commission also recognizes that the state has a fundamental interest and perhaps greater ability to influence public education to mitigate the damages racial and other isolation is inflicting on all of us as a society.

One way to reduce the impact of housing patterns might be to amend the traditional school registration policies of the local school districts (i.e., attending the school nearest your place of residence) by encouraging (and allowing) attendance at the school nearest the place of employment of the parent or guardian. Many jobs still remain in the central metropolitan areas. The parent could drive the child to school, saving on transportation. Attendance at schools near the parent's workplace could have a positive impact on the integration of schools in both cities and towns; not to mention the advantage of having a parent close by the school in case of emergencies and for increasing participation in the ongoing life and community of the school (see Finding 4).

The school would need to offer a full-day program with a latchkey recreational and educational enhancement component (museum visitations, arts, music, games, study times, remedial and homework assistance). Since child care is already a cost factor in employment, the program could be supported by user fees.

Most of our findings and recommendations address issues of education. However, the Commission strongly feels that educational opportunity cannot be addressed in isolation and that every aspect of public policy in every region of our state should be linked in the cooperative enterprise of removing barriers to achievement and the common ground that strengthens us all as a society.

Lack of Minority Faculty

The Commission also found that few students enjoy exposure to an integrated faculty, another important aspect of a quality and integrated education. Minority group members represent 6.3 percent of the certified school staff, compared to almost 25 percent of the student enrollment, and that gap, too, has been increasing. At the same time, "minority teachers are more heavily concentrated in the five large cities than minority students are. The large cities employ 70.6 percent of the minority group teachers; the small towns, just over one percent" (*Minority Students and Staff Report*, State Board of Education, 1989).

Multicultural Curriculum

Also missing from the education of many Connecticut public school students is the chance to study a curriculum that reflects the heritage of many cultures. Numerous national educators note that the curricula currently in use reflect mainly European history and culture and tend to slight the histories, contributions and cultures of Asia, Africa and Latin America. To operate effectively and empathetically in a global economy, our students need to understand the perspectives and concerns of others. Our curriculum should acknowledge and value both our shared core culture and the unique cultural backgrounds of the many groups that contribute to our country and the world.

Unequal Educational Opportunities

Despite Connecticut's commitment to provide equal educational opportunity for all of its students, the Commission found inequalities persisting, particularly for those in urban schools. For example, a significant underrepresentation of minority students exists in higher-level courses while overrepresentation of minority students can be found in remedial classes.

While the state maintains no data on the diversity of students enrolled in advanced placement courses, its information on the number of students taking advanced placement examinations show that of the 3,202 high school students, minority and nonminority, who took the examination in 1988-89, only 282, or 8.2 percent, were minority students. The report *What Americans Study* (Policy Information Report, Education Testing Service, Princeton, New Jersey) examines differences in course taking by race. Nationally, "African-American 1987 graduates . . . . continued to lag substantially behind white graduates in advanced mathematics courses". For example, 65.9 percent of white 11th graders had taken geometry, compared to 46.0 percent of African-American 11th graders.

Moreover, minority students are overrepresented in such remedial classes as Chapter 1. In 1987-88, Chapter 1 was 47 percent nonminority and 53 percent minority, almost double the minority percentage statewide. Even when broken down by type of community (TOC), the minority percentage enrolled in Chapter 1 remained higher than the percentage of each minority group in each TOC.

Other indicators suggest that Connecticut's minority students have yet to receive full equal educational opportunities. For example, the widespread use of tracking and ability grouping persists, despite the compelling studies that show these practices inhibit student achievement, particularly for minority students. Additional recent research questions the benefits of tracking even for its so-called benefited students. Tracking may also include retaining students in lower grades, which flies in the face of research showing that students retained in early grades tend, sooner or later, to become dropouts.

Recent reports on educational outcomes for poor and minority students question the effectiveness of such current practices as tracking, ability grouping and grade retention. For example, in *Education That Works: An Action Plan for the Education of Minorities,* one can read that:

> . . . . in the first few days of school, judgments are made about children in the classroom. Some children, it is decided, are advanced, some are average, and some are behind, and so the grouping and tracking begin. In most school systems in our nation, this decision effectively seals the child's fate, sometimes for life. Students classified as slow almost never catch up and school rapidly becomes a forum for failure, not an arena for success. By the time these children are in middle schools, tracking intensifies and options begin to close. Minority children are liable to be placed in nonacademic tracks because they do not fit the stereotypical, middle-class images our present educational system holds up as ideal (such as fluency in English, highly educated parents, and supportive out-of-school experiences). What many need is an enriched program to compensate for the lack of these assets. Students must not only hear that "all children can

learn", they must feel that they are truly valued and that they can achieve academic success. This includes the valuing of their culture and language and the appreciation of their individual talents, essential ingredients for heightened self-esteem.

A second study reported in *Better Schooling for the Children of Poverty: Alternatives to Conventional Wisdom* also addresses the issue of ability grouping or tracking. It notes that "conventional wisdom" places "an emphasis on disadvantaged learners' lack of information and intellectual facility". According to the report, ability grouping is a problem because "low-achieving students tend to become permanently segregated in these groupings or tracks. To make matters worse, determinations of 'low achievement' are not necessarily reliable, which means that students' academic abilities can be misdiagnosed. This happens all too often when ethnic or linguistic features (e.g., dialect speech or limited English proficiency) are misinterpreted as signs of low ability . . . . Furthermore, segregation in lower-track groups carries with it a visible stigma that contributes to certain students being labeled 'dummies', not to mention the more limited curricula that are sometimes offered such groups."

The report also goes on to say that "because the evidence is mixed on the efficacy of ability grouping for low achievers, teachers should consider a variety of alternative arrangements", and it suggests that teachers use "heterogeneous grouping such as cooperative and team learning and more flexible and temporary ability-grouped arrangements".

Gap Between Nonminority and Minority Achievement Scores

The nation's and Connecticut's future depends on whether we provide a quality education for all students, rich and poor, minority and nonminority. The Commission found the same trend throughout the country evident in Connecticut: The average achievement of nonminority students exceeds that of minority students right from the start. For example, the results of the 1987 Connecticut Mastery Test (CMT) for Grades 4, 6 and 8 show substantial gaps in achievement between minority and nonminority students. At the fourth grade level, 74 percent of the white students met the composite remedial standard, but only 36 percent of African-American fourth graders and 32 percent of Hispanic fourth graders met this standard. Similarly, 31 percent of white fourth graders met the mastery standard, while only 6 percent of African-American students and 5 percent of Hispanic students met this higher standard. Similar disparities appeared on the sixth and eighth grade mastery tests. In addition, students whose dominant language was other than English were three times more likely to fall short of the remedial standards, and students who were in the free or reduced-price lunch program were almost twice as likely to fall short of the standards.

The achievement gap between minority and nonminority students may be attributable in part to the widely held view that "natural ability, rather than effort, explains achievement" (*American's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages,* the Report of the Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce).

The impact of this "belief" is that:

> . . . . we communicate to millions of students every year, especially to low-income and minority students, that we do not believe that they have what it takes to learn. They then live up to our expectations, despite the evidence that they can meet very high standards under the right conditions.

Meanwhile, other nations, our business competitors, point to hard work as the road to achievement. Hard work still applies here. We do little to serve poor children by letting down standards under the pretext of equal educational opportunity. We serve them best by raising expectations while building schools where they can meet these expectations.

Public Attitudes Toward Integration in Public Schools

During its deliberations, the Governor's Commission on Quality and Integrated Education commissioned the Institute for Social Inquiry at the University of Connecticut to conduct a public opinion survey to determine statewide attitudes toward integration. The majority of respondents gave generally high marks to the Connecticut public schools, and those respondents with children in public school rated the schools even higher than those without public school children.

When asked to list the most important factors in choosing a school, those surveyed focused on such "quality-related" issues as the number and quality of teachers and the breadth of programs. For example, enrichment programs received the highest rating: they were seen as "positive" by 94 percent of the respondents. "Small classes with individual attention from teachers" followed closely (92 percent). In third place, the respondents ranked the value of keeping students in schools in the same town where they lived (83 percent). Issues of racial balance came fourth. Seventy percent of all respondents rated "making sure there was a good mix of racial backgrounds" and "having teachers from a variety of racial backgrounds" as either positive or very positive factors. Day-care programs and early childhood education also emerged as positive factors. Seventy percent saw before- and after-school day care as positive, while 61 percent said preschool programs would be an attraction were they choosing a school.

The general attitude toward integration proved positive, and when asked if more should be done "to integrate schools in your community", those in favor (42 percent) easily outnumbered those opposed (18 percent). The remaining 40 percent either considered no change necessary or didn't know. There was also strong support for doing more "to integrate schools throughout the state", with 54 percent calling for more such efforts. At the same time, voluntary efforts were favored over mandatory programs, 39 to 17 percent. The respondents also strongly favored beginning integration efforts in the elementary schools (80 percent).

Those surveyed recognized a certain quality in integrated schools. Seven in 10 agreed that "making sure a school is racially and culturally mixed improves the quality of education for all students". Over 60 percent agreed that "children who go to a one-race school will be at a disadvantage when they grow up and must live and work in our multiracial society". Two-thirds agreed that "if more children went to racially mixed schools, we would have less of a problem with racial prejudice".

When asked whether or not they supported "busing of minority and white students to achieve school integration", the respondents rejected the practice five to three, but when the survey linked the concept of quality schools to the concept of busing, the percentage of favorable responses increased to one-half. "Busing" clearly remains an unpopular concept.

Apparently, the public sees busing to achieve racial balance as one thing and integration as another, even though the terms have often been used interchangeably. Busing and racial balance appear to connote moving children from school to school to achieve some numerical goal or to meet some administrative need. Integration, on the other hand, suggests positive, productive interaction between students of different races and cultures: "Racial balance" does not contribute to quality education; "integration" does. According to the survey director, "The public sees little value in achieving numerical balance which may not help education and which treats students as members of classes."

THE FINDINGS

Following its research into the dimensions of racial isolation in education in Connecticut and nationally, the Governor's Commission on Quality and Integrated Education developed the following six findings.

(1) Educational opportunity cannot be addressed in isolation and every aspect of public policy in every region of the state should be linked in the cooperative enterprise of removing barriers to achievement and of promoting the common ground that strengthens us all as a society.

(2) A quality education requires an integrated student body and faculty and a curriculum that reflects the heritage of many cultures.

(3) Every student can learn at high levels from a quality and integrated education.

(4) A need exists for communities to appreciate and support public education, and for family members and others in the community to involve themselves in the education of Connecticut's youth.

(5) Every educator must be trained to teach both a diverse student population and a curriculum that incorporates and honors the diverse cultural and racial heritages.

(6) Connecticut needs to attract and employ minority educators.

For each of its findings, the Commission established a goal, indicators of success, and recommendations for achieving the goal. Each finding is discussed separately in the following sections of this report.

FINDING 1

The Commission's first finding is that we cannot ignore the underlying causes of isolation and inequity in our schools and hope meaningfully to improve quality and integrated education. Meaningful action is needed in every region of the state to honestly recognize disparities and join in a shared effort to help ourselves by helping each other overcome the inequities which deny us the fullest measure of our potential in our communities, regions and state.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission recommends that the communities in each and every region of the state shall join in a cooperative effort over the next year to identify and assess present barriers such as poverty, education, employment, housing, health and transportation which perpetuate inequity, isolation and the lack of greater integration. Each region must then develop and commit to a cooperative plan of community and regional action with triennial evaluation and progress reporting.

Regions could be identified by reference to regional planning agencies or regional educational service centers. Existing regional authorities or newly designated regional representatives would be designated for this purpose. State agencies, regional planning agencies and regional educational service centers would cooperatively provide administrative support and other technical assistance as required. Failure of any community to participate in this process could jeopardize some or all state funding for the community.

FINDING 2

Having concluded that a quality education requires an integrated student body and faculty and a curriculum that reflects the heritage of many cultures, the Commission's concomitant goal is to maximize the number of students who receive a quality education, increasing the number who do so significantly each year.

The integration of our young learners supports our hope for a more harmonious new century than the one now drawing to a close. We know hatred, prejudice, and racism when we see it, and we see it all around us. We also know fellowship, tolerance, and mutual respect when we see it, and examples abound in our daily lives: the widespread acceptance by young people of a multiethnic culture in music, sports, and style; the absence of prejudice among young children who come together for play or preschool activities.

The Commission believes that each school's student population should reflect the majority to minority ratio of the students in its region. The Commission further believes that the goal of quality and integrated education will be achieved when each school provides an integrated learning environment reflected or demonstrated in most or all of the following seven ways:

(1) Educational goals and the school environment must welcome and accommodate integrated education;

(2) The curriculum should impart an expectation that all students will become successful learners;

(3) The curriculum, both written and informal, should be multicultural, reflecting the heritage of many cultures;

(4) Instructional materials and library collections too must mirror the heritage of many cultures;

(5) In appraising the education of all our children, we must use appropriate assessments;

(6) Schools should supplement a multicultural environment with complementary assembly programs, field trips, etc.; and

(7) The school leadership must remain open and responsive to constructive proposals from staff, parents, and their organizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

First, the Commission recommends that the State Board of Education develop guidelines for an integrated and multicultural school environment by June 1992. Each school district should then develop its own local standards, consistent with state guidelines while reflecting local diversity. These standards would identify those characteristics of the school environment that create a multicultural school, including the content of the curriculum and the teaching perspectives, the instructional procedures and styles, and the general organization of the schools.

Second, the Commission recommends that the State Board of Education review the state's racial balance law and regulations in the light of the Commission's recommendations and the experiences of school districts implementing the law.

Third, the Commission recommends that the state legislature create and expand and then fund a continuum of educational experiences in the new integrated environment. A continuum of state funding programs would allow local school districts to formulate local integration projects that reflect local needs and that build on local strengths. The recommended programs follow here.

I. Interdistrict Transfers

The Commission recommends creation of a new Interdistrict Transfers Grant Program. The state legislature should establish a state grant program for interdistrict transfers based on Project Concern, but accommodating two-way transfers. Students currently participating in Project Concern would be "grandfathered" into the new program, which would have the following seven characteristics.

(1) It would establish a separate interdistrict grant to underwrite tuition and transportation aids (Project Concern is currently funded through the compensatory education grant program).

(2) It would set a target for increased student participation each year beginning with the fiscal year 1992-93.

(3) It would invite parents to apply to include their children; however, only those children whose transfer promises to enhance the cultural diversity of the receiving school may participate.

(4) It would allow the sending school district to continue to count the student as part of its enrollment and pay tuition to the receiving district (for example, tuition based on a percentage of the sending district's per pupil expenditures or a percentage of its state education aid per pupil).

(5) It would require the state to pay the receiving school district a grant based on per pupil expenditures.

(6) It would require the state to pay the sending school district 100 percent of the costs of transportation in excess of $400 per pupil; the state would pay the normal aid percentage for the first $400 of costs, and the maximum excess costs grant would be $1,000 per pupil.

(7) It would require the local districts to announce the number of net seats available for interdistrict transfers (the net equaling incoming minus outgoing), and if the number of applications exceeds the number of seats available, districts shall use a lottery to determine which students will attend; no screening criteria other than cultural diversity may be applied.

II. Interdistrict Cooperative Grant

The Commission recommends expansion of the Interdistrict Cooperative Grant. Thirty-six grant proposals were submitted for 1991-92. The proposals involved over 100 districts and the total funding requested was $2 million. Because of limited funding, however, only 27 programs were awarded grants, and they received only 63 percent of the amount requested. State funding limits forced cutbacks in many of these programs, some of which were in their third year of funding and had student waiting lists.

The state should limit grants under this program to activities during the regular school year and to (a) planning for full-year programs (with a two-year limit on planning grants) or (b) short-term or part-time student programs. Joint programs involving at least one district that has less than 15 percent minority students should receive preference, and the state legislature should increase funding to $2 million in 1991-92 and to $3 million in 1992-93. Over the long term, the legislature needs to provide sufficient funding to ensure the continuation of effective programs.

III. Summer School Grant

The Commission recommends expansion of the Summer School Grant, which served 12,000 students in 17 local programs at a total funding level of $1 million in 1990-91. The State Board of Education has requested $1 million for 1991-92. We recommend that the legislature increase funding by $1 million per year for two years. We further recommend that the grant program be limited to (1) interdistrict integrated programs, (2) full-day programs, (3) programs that run for at least 20 days, and (4) programs that combine remedial and enrichment activities. The summer program should also include a follow-up component that would allow students and teachers to reinforce understandings and relationships they established during the summer.

IV. Preschool Programs

The Commission recommends the creation of regional integrated preschool programs. The Commission's public opinion survey indicated significant support for these programs. By a wide margin, in fact, those polled believed that integration should begin in the elementary grades. In addition, research into the effects of the Head Start program documents significant gains from a year of quality preschool for children whose family incomes or medical status placed the child at risk of school failure.

The Commission recommends that a special grant program be established to fund the operation of at least three model regional integrated preschool programs, and it recommends that the state school construction laws be amended to provide state aid for either the construction or renovation of buildings to accommodate integrated preschool programs and day-care programs. All school districts should be eligible for this aid.

V. Magnet Schools

The Commission recommends that school districts and parents work to ensure that each child has an opportunity to attend an integrated regional magnet school or to participate in an interdistrict program in a school with a diverse student body. The Commission recommends that the state, in partnership with local school districts, establish sufficient regional magnet programs to guarantee space for each child who chooses to learn in an integrated school. The Commission also recommends that the state develop standards for the operation of regional magnet schools that address, at least, the following ten concerns:

(1) A rigorous high-quality academic program;
(2) An academically diverse student body;
(3) The racial composition of the student body;
(4) The racial composition of the staff;
(5) A multicultural curriculum;
(6) Staff training that accommodates cultural diversity;
(7) Admission procedures, retention patterns, and student discipline;
(8) Community involvement in the magnet school planning;
(9) Parent awareness, commitment and involvement; and
(10) Participation of bilingual and special education students.

The Commission recommends that the state amend the school construction laws to provide generous funding for the construction, renovation and/or leasing of buildings to house regional magnet schools. The Commission further recommends that the state amend school construction laws to provide funding for the construction, renovation or leasing of buildings for magnet schools on both public and private college campuses.

The Commission recommends that the State Board of Education examine the idea of establishing satellite elementary magnet schools on the sites of large businesses. It also recommends that school districts form regional partnerships to plan and operate magnet schools, that the regional educational service centers assume responsibility for the structure and support of these regional planning efforts, and that the state help underwrite the planning and operating of these magnet schools. The public opinion poll showed strong support for integration at the elementary level.

The Commission's study of school expansion and replacement needs revealed a pending need for substantial elementary school construction in the Bridgeport, Hartford, New Haven, New London and Stamford-Norwalk areas. There appears, however, to be no widespread need for new middle and high school classrooms. The need for new elementary classroom space presents an opportunity for the establishment of regional magnet schools.

The Commission recommends that the State Board of Education instruct the Educational Equity Study Committee to develop specific legislative proposals for entitlement grants to fund these regional magnet schools while incorporating the concept of state and regional partnership. The Equity Committee should address (1) school construction grants, (2) magnet planning grants, (3) operating grants for the extra costs of magnet schools, and (4) transportation grants. In addition, the Commission recommends that the State Board of Education ask the Educational Equity Study Committee to develop a grant program to assist districts with more than 25 percent minority students to develop and implement intradistrict magnet schools.

The Equity Committee also should develop specific legislative proposals for the new interdistrict transfer grant and the preschool grant and related changes in the school construction laws and regulations. The Equity Committee should begin meeting in the spring of 1991 and transmit a preliminary report to the State Board of Education by January 1992.

VI. State Vocational-Technical Schools

The Commission recommends that the state expand the outreach programs of its vocational-technical schools. To ensure that the state's existing regional magnet school system, the regional vocational-technical schools, remains a model of diversity in staff, students and curriculum, the Commission recommends that the state fund special outreach programs targeted to currently underrepresented groups. The Commission further recommends that the state expand the seventh grade summer exploratory programs and target currently underrepresented groups. The Commission recommends funding for these proposals for fiscal year 1991-92 at $300,000.

VII. Technology for Integration

The Commission recommends the use of technology such as computer networking, interactive television, and distance learning to foster links between urban and suburban districts and between urban and rural districts.

VIII. Nontraditional Approaches

Recognizing that traditional solutions may only yield traditional results, the Commission recommends that the state determine the desirability of establishing nontraditional approaches to achieving integration.

IX. Priority School District Grant

The Commission recommends that the state significantly increase funding for the Priority School District programs.

FINDING 3

The Commission's third finding is that all students can learn at high levels with a quality and integrated education. The goal for each school in Connecticut is to maximize each and every student's learning so as to help all students become productive and responsible members of a pluralistic society. We will have achieved this goal when:

(1) A student's achievement is no longer affected by such irrelevant factors as race, ethnicity, gender, residence and wealth;

(2) These irrelevant factors no longer limit a student's access to educational programs;

(3) Each school offers appropriate educational opportunities to maximize student learning;

(4) All students graduate with an education best preparing them to be productive, responsible and effective adults; and

(5) All students are exposed to both cognitive and experiential education, ensuring their understanding of and appreciation for our society's racial, ethnic and cultural diversity.

This goal agrees with those in several other recent reports and with the first goal of the National Governor's Association: "By the year 2000 all children will start school ready to learn." The National Governor's report goes on to say that:

> . . . . in preparing young people to start school, both the federal and state governments have important roles to play, especially with regard to health, nutrition, and early childhood development. The federal government should work with the states to develop and fully fund early intervention strategies for children. All eligible children should have access to Head Start, Chapter One, or some other successful preschool program with strong parental involvement. Our first priority must be to provide at least one year of preschool for all disadvantaged children.

In support of its goal, the National Governor's Association developed the following three objectives:

(1) All disadvantaged and disabled children will have access to high-quality and developmentally appropriate preschool programs that help prepare children for school;

(2) Every parent in America will be a child's first teacher and devote time each day helping his or her preschool child learn; parents will have access to the training and support they need; and

(3) Children will receive the nutrition and health care needed to arrive at school with healthy minds and bodies, and the number of low-birth-weight babies will be significantly reduced through enhanced prenatal health systems.

RECOMMENDATIONS

First, the Commission agrees that a strong beginning is critical to success in school, and to ensure that all students come to school ready to learn, the Commission recommends that school districts, in cooperation with appropriate state and local agencies:

(1) Provide, through the appropriate health department staff, preventive health-care programs at all schools where there is a significant percentage of low-income students;

(2) Provide school breakfast and school lunch programs in all schools with a significant percentage of low-income students; and

(3) Provide at least one year of preschool for all at-risk students.

Second, given these concerns, the Commission recommends that the state work with local school districts to develop and promote alternatives to tracking and ability grouping.

Third, to ensure that all districts provide the appropriate range of programs and maintain appropriate class sizes, the Commission recommends that the Educational Equity Study Committee review current state aid programs to ensure that these programs favor those schools and districts with the greatest financial needs and those students with the greatest educational needs. The range of educational programs at a school or district must be sufficiently broad, deep and diverse to maximize and enrich the education of every student. Class size and student faculty ratios should, moreover, reflect educational policy rather than the limits of school or district wealth. The Educational Equity Study Committee should report its recommendations and proposed legislation to the State Board of Education by January 1992.

Fourth, to improve the effectiveness of our educational system and encourage all students to learn at the highest levels possible, the Commission supports (1) current state efforts to restructure its testing programs to include more performance assessments, including items based on the *Common Core of Learning;* and (2) state and local school district plans to report annually on students and educational outcomes by individual schools and districts.

FINDING 4

The Commission's fourth finding is the need for our local communities and the state to appreciate and support public education and for family members and other community members to increase their involvement in the education of Connecticut's youth. The Commission is disturbed by an apparent erosion of community support for public education in recent years, and has formulated two goals in response to this concern:

(1) Communities must come to understand the full value of public education in our society and economy and actively support it; and

(2) All adult family members and other community members must increase their involvement in the education of Connecticut's youth.

The Commission suggests that educators, parents, community and business leaders all have a role to play in communicating to our children, in particular, and to the entire community, the critical importance of getting the best education possible. Those who would remain competitive in the global economy require a well-educated work force: "No nation has produced a highly qualified work force without first providing its workers with a strong general education".[2] We will have achieved these two goals when:

(1) The state, the cities, the school districts, and the whole community recognize the necessity of an educated population and work cooperatively to support public education;

(2) Parents and guardians (a) adequately prepare their children for school (that is, make certain they are housed, are clothed, and maintain good health practices); (b) emphasize the importance of education and maintain a positive attitude toward school; (c) follow their children's progress in school by attending school orientation, information and training sessions; and

(3) Each school offers an outreach program designed to involve all members of the community.

[2] *America's Choice: High Skills or Low Wages!* Commission on the Skills of the American Workforce, National Center on Education and the Economy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

First, the Commission recommends that local school districts, in concert with parents and community and business leaders, develop long-term educational outcomes for their students. The community should also specify those education skills they consider essential for their community.

Second, the Commission recommends that local school districts and community leaders work together to develop an information program that promotes a clearer understanding of the strong direct connection between a well-educated work force and a competitive economy.

Third, the Commission recommends that parents and educators work closely together to keep all students engaged in a rigorous program of learning from the elementary grades through the high school years. Such a partnership is critical if we are to ensure that all children are prepared to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

Fourth, to help parents become effective partners with teachers in supporting and monitoring their children's educational programs, the Commission recommends that parents and educators together plan and implement a program of parent orientation and training. The purpose of these programs would be (1) to inform parents about their child's program of studies, and (2) to share with parents the latest and best information on how children learn and how parents can help their children learn. The Commission recommends that schools and parents set goals for parent involvement in their children's education.

Fifth, working with the larger community, the Commission recommends that local school districts develop outreach programs to encourage local businesses, community agencies (for example, the social service centers, day-care centers, and churches), and the elderly to become involved in their community's schools:

(1) By contributing financially to school activities, and to such complementary educational resources as libraries;

(2) By becoming tutors, oral historians, instructors or helpers in school activities, either during the regular school day or as part of after-school or seasonal activities;

(3) By visiting classrooms and illustrating for students the skills required in a particular line of business – holding out the hope, meanwhile, that a child may gain employment in that business with the appropriate educational preparation; and

(4) In every case possible, encourage local businesses to hire and train neighborhood students for either summer or year-round positions.

FINDING 5

The Commission's fifth finding is that Connecticut educators must be trained to teach both a diverse student population and a curriculum that incorporates the heritages of diverse cultural and racial groups. Our goal must be to familiarize our teachers with the skills and knowledge necessary for teaching a diverse student population and curricula that embrace multicultural understanding.

Most of us are brought up conditioned to be ethnocentric, to believe that our culture is both different and better. This is particularly true when a cultural group lives in relative isolation. Our country has been strengthened from the first by cultural differences and is becoming ever more diverse. All humankind, in fact, now lives in a world where groups are becoming increasingly interrelated, less and less isolated. Accordingly, we must all learn about other cultures.

As our most valuable human investment, children, most of all, deserve a strong foundation of ethnic diversity and cultural pluralism throughout the curriculum. Cultural pluralism means that each person, regardless of group identification, enjoys an inherent claim to respect, dignity and rights. Cultural pluralism also implies that no one cultural style enjoys an inherent precedence over another. Our country and our state then act unfairly by imposing a curriculum in language arts, history and the arts that disproportionately reflects a white, European culture. Nevertheless, *A Study of Book-Length Works Taught in High School English Courses* found that:

> A summary of the titles required by 30 percent or more of the public schools compares the results in 1988 with those 25 years earlier. Of the 27 titles that appear in 30 percent or more of the schools, 4 are by Shakespeare, 3 by Steinbeck, and 2 each by Twain and Dickens. Only two women appear on the list – Harper Lee and Anne Frank – and there are no minority authors.

The author concludes that there are ". . . fundamental questions about the nature of the literary and cultural experiences that students should share, as well as the degree of differentiation that is necessary if all students are to be able to claim a place and an identity within the works that they read. The debates also involve fundamental pedagogical questions about the most effective means to help all students develop an appreciation for and competence in the reading of literature."

As our nation becomes more culturally diverse and the need grows for our people to appreciate and understand different cultures, educators must develop learning experiences and environments that preserve and illustrate, with a sense of gratefulness and appreciation, each group's contribution to the richness of the entire society.

An amalgamation of approaches – enhancing, for example, the teacher preparation programs, eliminating materials that contain bias, supportive administrators, integrating the entire curriculum, and ongoing programs that promote interaction among students – would strengthen and enliven our school system and encourage it to serve all of our students beneficially and equally.

But such a fundamental change in our public school curriculum requires a concomitant change in teacher preparation. The Commission concludes, therefore, we will have achieved this goal only when each educator has been trained to teach both a diverse student population and a curriculum that incorporates the heritages of diverse cultural and racial groups.

RECOMMENDATIONS

First of all, we must change our teacher preparation programs to include the following six training elements:

(1) Future teachers must acquire the skills to effectively teach in a diverse student environment. All teacher preparation programs should require a comprehensive urban teaching experience;

(2) Future teachers must be able to develop and teach a multicultural curriculum, and teacher preparation programs should require a course of study in multicultural education;

(3) To attain an appreciation for cultures other than their own, teachers should become proficient in a second language. Programs should include the study of the language itself, and the history, literature and culture of the country;

(4) Immersion being the smoothest path to understanding a different culture, teacher preparation programs should encourage foreign exchange programs;

(5) The Permanent Advisory Council on the Teaching Profession should prepare now to incorporate multicultural education into the certification and recertification regulations; and

(6) The current certification regulations should be revised to reflect the new teacher preparation requirements for a student exchange experience, a second language proficiency, courses on student diversity and the multicultural curriculum.

Second, educators already in the work force must enjoy the same opportunity for training as the individuals in teacher preparation programs. Accordingly, the Commission recommends that (a) the Connecticut Department of Education use funding and regulations to encourage multicultural education training for all professional educators; (b) with its Celebration of Excellence program as a model, the Department of Education fund exemplary curriculum projects which incorporate diversity and educate about prejudice; and (c) the teacher preparation program centers in the Connecticut State University system be used to develop the programs recommended.

Third, additional funding should be made available to implement the following three programs:

(1) Institutions of higher education should hire faculty members with experience in developing multicultural curriculum for its teacher preparation programs;

(2) Institutions of higher education should plan a series of workshops designed to incorporate the multicultural curriculum concept into the professional development experience of all teachers; and

(3) Institutions of higher education should provide teacher and student exchange grants and establish a study abroad center for students in teacher preparation programs.

As we do so often when our society faces problems, again we ask our schools to address the issue within our children's educational experiences. The concern this time is for cultural diversity; the request this time, however, is fraught with complexity and emotion. Multicultural education already exists, at least rhetorically; but the Commission can find few examples of it flourishing in the classroom. Several studies confirm that the principal requirement for the success of this type of program is teacher awareness. Robert E. Slavin states, "To train teachers to foster interracial interaction, teacher workshops should be focused not on understanding intergroup relations, but on specific teaching methods that promote student interaction".

Fourth, the Commission recommends that centers be established at which teachers and administrators would be able to satisfy their professional development requirements (continuing education units – CEUs) by participating in workshops. Centers would be funded by a state grant.

FINDING 6

The Commission found that there are too few minority educators in the State of Connecticut, and its recommended goal is for the state to begin immediately to increase the number of minority educators.

Today, only 6 percent of the 37,000 full-time professional staff in the state's public schools are members of minority groups. One-hundred-and-one districts (61%) have less than one percent minority staff. Sixty-five of these districts have no minority teaching staff. Of particular concern is the low number of minority professionals in the area of special education as reflected in *A Plan to Increase Minority Participation At All Levels in the Special Education Profession.*

Meanwhile, minority boys and girls comprise almost 25 percent of the student population, and projections indicate that as the minority student population increases, the number of minority teachers will decrease. Too rarely do minority youngsters find the adult role models they need in their school buildings. White students miss out, too. If we want to inculcate in our children the value and importance of diversity, the lesson must start in the classroom. In addition, the low number of minority teachers deprives the profession itself of the valuable enrichment that comes from a diverse mix of teachers and administrators and their approaches to issues in instruction and curriculum. However, if we take no steps to reverse the trend, by 2020 "the average child will have only two minority teachers – out of about 40 – during his or her Kindergarten through twelve school years. And this underrepresentation will be worse at the college level". [3]

But how can we as a state reverse these trends? The Commission finds that minority graduation rates from four-year institutions remain disproportionately low, and some questions follow from this fact: How can we increase the numbers of minority people entering and graduating from our colleges and universities when they meet fewer and fewer college-educated minorities in their earlier schooling? How can we attract minorities into the profession of teaching when they can find fewer and fewer minority colleagues there? And, how do we retain those who enter the teaching profession when other professions actively beckon?

The key is to put in place a comprehensive, thoroughly integrated state plan involving the entire education system. The Commission will consider the goal achieved when each school district has an integrated faculty. The objectives will require Connecticut to (a) increase the number of minorities graduating from teacher preparation programs in the state; (b) recruit minority teachers from out-of-state; (c) retain minority teachers in the profession; and (d) regionalize the recruitment and retention of minority teachers.

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[3] *New Strategies for Producing Minority Teachers,* Alliance of Leaders for Minority Teachers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

First, we absolutely must increase the number of minorities graduating from teacher preparation programs in the State of Connecticut. The Department of Higher Education has initiated a program to recruit and retain minorities in higher education throughout the state, and although we appear to be doing better, an under-representation of minority students persists in four-year institutions generally and in teacher preparation programs specifically. To increase the latter, we must increase the former. It is as simple as that. To attract Connecticut's young minority students to Connecticut colleges and universities, the state should, in the Commission's view, adopt the following six strategies.

(1) Identify minority teachers to serve as role models who agree to work with interested minority students in selected districts. These teachers would serve as mentors, providing their students with guidance and leadership as they prepare to enter college.

(2) Work with such other programs as Career Beginnings, Connecticut Collegiate Awareness Program (CONNCAP), Upward Bound and Day of Pride to guide minority students toward higher education. CONNCAP and Upward Bound are consortia between a college and a local school system that identify junior high school minority students who demonstrate college potential. The programs provide support and enrichment opportunities to students in anticipation of college. These programs convince young students with academic ability that they can succeed in college. CONNCAP provides academic enrichment and exposes students to a campus environment. A number of similar programs already exist, and they should all be encouraged and expanded.

(3) Establish among parents a positive impression of teaching as a profession. Parents have a strong influence on students' schooling and career choice, and part of any student program should be a segment for parents.

(4) Encourage partnerships between selected school districts and nearby colleges to help minority students continue on to college and succeed. After establishing a formal association between its high schools and higher education, the state should also make sure the students receive individual attention at the time of their admission and enrollment.

(5) Establish a minority scholarship program to ensure that academically qualified Connecticut African-American, Hispanic and other minority students have an opportunity to attend college. Colleges that participate in the program would agree to grant minority scholars compensatory aid commensurate with their financial needs.

(6) Create a magnet high school for those students expressing interest in the teaching profession and link this school formally with one or more colleges. Such a magnet school could provide field trips to institutions with teacher training programs, and its students could participate in seminars with college students.

Second, the Commission urges the state to encourage young minority students in its colleges and universities to enter the teaching profession by (a) establishing local programs to arouse interest in the teaching profession as early as middle school in districts with a significant minority student population [4] and (b) providing minority students with teaching internships in districts with significant minority student populations. High school students should receive stipends to participate in summer school programs for elementary students where they could serve as teacher aides and where they could observe peer teaching practices in the classroom. Such a summer program would give high school students a preliminary understanding of the profession through teaching experience.

Third, the Commission recommends the following four strategies to retain minority students in the teacher preparation programs.

(1) Provide scholarships to minority students enrolled in teacher preparation programs. Needy minority students who enroll in a full-time undergraduate teacher preparation program at an accredited degree-granting institution of higher education in the state should receive grant funds to meet their financial needs. The grants could require the recipients to return to a specific region or district to teach. The Norwalk Public Schools has established the "Vectron Scholar Program", which awards a four-year scholarship to a Connecticut university for a student who agrees to teach in the Norwalk Public Schools for four years after graduating.

[4] The Future Teachers of America was once popular in middle and high schools and this type of program acquainted youngsters with the benefits of a teaching career.

(2) Encourage partnerships between community colleges and teacher preparation institutions to develop a new route to teacher certification that includes two years at a community college and two years at a teacher preparation institution. A number of excellent cooperative programs already exist between community colleges and four-year institutions. Developing a formal partnership would link the two institutions so that the community college would become a natural recruiting ground for the four-year institution. Such a partnership would also present young students with an awareness of the opportunities for education beyond the community college.

(3) Adopt the academic and counseling support programs presently used for college athletes as a model to support minority students enrolled in teacher preparation programs. Students often feel overwhelmed by their college assignments. Assistance with the development of personal discipline and good study habits can lead directly to a successful college experience.

(4) Expand the Teaching Opportunities for Paraprofessionals program to assist paraprofessionals to become certified teachers. Teacher aides have already made their interest in education evident by working in our public schools. They represent potential minority teachers worthy of special attention. Under the current program, paraprofessionals generally work in a school one half-year and take courses in a teacher preparation program the other half-year. They remain, however, on a full-time salary and are reimbursed for their academic expenses after successful completion of the semester. This program presently exists in several urban districts where minority paraprofessionals are greatest in number, and it should be expanded.

Fourth, Connecticut must continue to recruit minority teachers from out of state. The Commission recognizes that several years will pass before the state can reap the benefits of any in-state teacher preparation minority recruitment program. Therefore, strengthening the current effort to recruit out of state makes sense in the short run to increase the number of minority teachers in the state. To recruit out-of-state teachers successfully, the Commission recommends that Connecticut:

(1) Develop comprehensive and systematic recruitment strategies. To compete with other states recruiting the same individuals, Connecticut should launch a sophisticated advertising campaign, ease the application process, allow for flexibility in the administration of the CONNCEPT and CONNTENT tests for out-of-state applicants, initiate a computer database of applicants, establish a formal interview process; and

(2) Streamline certification requirements and develop reciprocity agreements between states to promote the out-of-state recruitment process.

The Connecticut Department of Education should also study the possibility of assisting the districts and regional educational service centers to recruit minority teachers from out of state.

Fifth, Connecticut must initiate incentives that encourage the retention of minority teachers. Connecticut's record on recruiting minority teachers, especially from out of state, has so far been poor. Its record for retaining these teachers is even worse. The state needs programs designed to retain minority teachers once they begin to practice here. The following three strategies would help.

(1) Connecticut should establish partnerships with out-of-state colleges and universities serving predominantly minority populations. Few recruitment campaigns enjoy success without individuals on campus willing to help. Establishing a relationship with these colleges that encourages its staff to act as liaison would be most beneficial.

(2) Connecticut should establish a program to assist minority students who become full-time teachers or hold professional positions with a Connecticut public elementary or secondary school or any accredited college or university in the repayment of their educational loans.

(3) Connecticut should establish a mentoring program to help acclimate the new minority teacher professionally and socially. New Connecticut residents often have difficulty locating the services they need and a professional colleague willing to acquaint the new teacher with Connecticut's educational system along with the neighborhood housing, shopping, religious services and social services would relieve much of a newcomer's anxiety.

Sixth, the Commission recommends the regionalization of its minority teacher recruitment and retention efforts. Presently, individual districts recruit out of state to obtain minority teachers. More often than not, these districts not only find themselves competing with other districts in other states, they find themselves competing with their Connecticut neighbors. The costs associated with out-of-state recruitment are high; the success rate is low.

Thus, the state should devote special consideration to the regional effort developed by the Capitol Region Education Council (CREC) in 1988. With the assistance of a small interdistrict grant from the Connecticut Department of Education, approximately 20 districts have pooled funding and staff to recruit and retain minority professionals. Participating districts target vacancies for which the program can recruit. A coordinated recruiting strategy includes posters, brochures and advertisements, all distributed to specifically targeted locations throughout the East and Southeast. Individual members represent the program at conferences, job fairs and on-campus recruitment efforts. CREC has also begun to establish linkages between local schools and colleges with teacher preparation programs. A committee has begun to identify and support promising minority students with an interest in teaching. The program encourages the formation of Future Teachers of America organizations in the participating districts. A group of teachers has volunteered as a "support system" for applicants who come to Connecticut for interviews and later offer new recruits information about the education system and the area.

A regional effort like the above is cost-effective and establishes a critical mass of vacancies for comprehensive recruitment. Such partnerships should appear throughout Connecticut, relying on the regional educational service centers (RESCs) as the logical coordinating arm.

The Commission, therefore, recommends that the state distribute small grants to each RESC to establish such a program using CREC as their model.

CONCLUSION

In addressing the "quality" component of a "quality and integrated education", Connecticut has positioned itself well for the coming century. We have already listed the specific attributes, skills and understandings we expect of our high school graduates in *Connecticut's Common Core of Learning,* and we list them in the language of "demonstrated student performance". *Connecticut's Common Core of Learning* speaks of "intellectual curiosity", "moral and ethical values", and "responsibility and self-reliance", among other attitudes and qualities. It also lists such basic competencies as "reading, writing and speaking", "quantitative skills", and "reasoning and problem solving". It also specifies understandings and applications in "the arts", "science and technology", and other key disciplines.

Having articulated what we expect from students, we can focus on results – demonstrated outcomes – rather than talking merely about student "exposure" and teacher "coverage". These expectations are more than just goals for our brightest students; they also reflect a common core that implies "the highest expectations for each child".

But with our sights now on these essential educational results, we are concerned about great numbers of students – mainly from low-income, minority neighborhoods, but also from the most affluent of our suburban towns – who fail to achieve them in the schools they attend.

Our educational system has thankfully placed such superficial and diversionary but divisive issues as forced busing behind it. But, as the formation of this Commission signals, educational inequities persist, including the isolation of the majority of Connecticut's students from daily classroom contact with students of other races and ethnic groups. It is time for all of us to break down the barriers that remain in our school districts, in our communities, in our schools and classrooms, and in our hearts.

When differences in class and income compound racial and ethnic differences, a clearer picture of the persistent inequity emerges. As our Commission notes, children who are poor rarely live near children who are rich, and all too many of Connecticut's African-American and Hispanic children and the children of our recent immigrants are poor. They are separate more because of income than because of the color of their skin. But it amounts to practically the same thing. Overcoming this deeply ingrained pattern of separateness will require initiatives based on the following four humanitarian principles:

(1) **Understanding antecedents.** Students must first explore the social and economic roots of prejudice to overcome them. Thus, our schools should continually celebrate the positive contributions and cultural richness of diverse ethnic groups.

(2) **Renewing values.** We overcome inequity best by rejecting the forces majorities traditionally use to oppress minorities. The remedy usually lies in reversing those forces. As Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that."

(3) **Building community.** In the search for quality and integrated education, the Commission found no substitute for children of different backgrounds working and learning together in the classroom.

(4) **Inviting action.** Students will learn in concert most freely when they are "drawn together" rather than "pushed together". When welcoming parental and professional incentives stand forth, integration will become a voluntary fact.

The Commission accepts the view that a quality and integrated education is an empowering education. We serve well the vital interests of our minority students by making our schools better places for all students. If they are truly to serve students of all ethnic groups, our school districts, administrators and teachers must reshape the way they help our children learn. Connecticut's investment in quality and integrated education must be – and will be – a smart investment. We cannot afford to sell our students short: they must do better than just get by, better than just stay in school, better than just graduate. Some 700,000 functionally illiterate students graduate each year from the high schools in this country, palpable proof that a high-quality education for every child remains a distant dream.

Educational renewal for equality and excellence is, in practical terms, the ounce of prevention that can save us billions in future dependency and bring us billions more in future productivity. But more important, it is also a matter of right and justice. The Commission challenges Connecticut to educate our children to find pride and a sense of well-being in all our neighborhoods and to help bring self-respect and productivity into all sectors of society.

Finally, this report suggests several ways to address the issue of quality and integrated education, but many more ways exist. The Commission members, therefore, urge the legislature, our educational agencies and our local schools to push the initiative beyond these six findings and the accompanying recommendations.

We believe Connecticut can lead the nation in addressing the issues of quality and integrated education, and we commend to our leaders the challenge Robert Kennedy borrowed by way of paraphrase from the Rabbi Hillel:

"If not us, who? If not now, when? If not here, where?"

Appendix A
Report of Activities
September 20, 1989, through December 31, 1990

September 20, 1989

Governor William A. O'Neill announced the appointment of the Governor's Commission on Quality and Integrated Education.

October 2, 1989

Commission co-chairs, Dr. David G. Carter and James P. Sandler, met with the leadership of five community foundations to request financial support for the Commission from the foundations.

October 12, 1989

The Commission held its first meeting reviewing the charge given by the Governor and discussing a tentative agenda and work plan. The Commission reviewed current state and local initiatives promoting integration and the two reports on integration issued by the Department of Education. The Commission also reviewed the report prepared by Dr. Janet Schofield on the impact of desegregation on students.

October 23, 1989

The Commission issued two requests for proposals (RFPs) for consultants to assist the Commission. One RFP was for a demographic and architectural study of public school construction in Connecticut. The second RFP was for a person or group to act as a consultant to the Commission providing a national perspective on integration and quality education.

October 26, 1989

The Commission held an organizational workshop to review a proposed meeting schedule, to discuss a possible subcommittee structure and to discuss the hiring of two consultants to assist the Commission.

(continued)

Report of Activities (continued)

November 9, 1989

At its second meeting the Commission heard reports on organizational matters. The Commission agreed on a subcommittee structure with three subcommittees: one focusing on school construction, a second focusing on school programs, and the third focusing on the recruitment and retention of minority teachers. The group received a status report on the two RFPs for consultants. Dr. Pascal Forgione, Jr. reviewed Department reports on (a) student enrollment projections and (b) minority students and staff.

November 21, 1989

The three subcommittees held their initial organizational meetings. They discussed their areas of focus and work plans.

December 7, 1989

Two of the subcommittees held meetings. The subcommittee on school construction interviewed representatives from H.C. Planning Consultants, Inc. (one of the groups responding to the RFPs). The interdistrict/intradistrict program subcommittee heard a report on Project Concern.

December 19, 1989

The Commission's third meeting was devoted to choosing the two consultant groups that would work with the Commission and prepare studies for the Commission. The Commission received five responses to each of its two RFPs. The Commission discussed these responses and voted to contract with (a) H.C. Planning Consultants, Inc. for the demographic and school construction study; and (b) The McKenzie Group to provide consultant services to the Commission.

Report of Activities (continued)

January 2, 1990

The Commission received word that a partnership of five community foundations would provide $100,000 to support the work of the Commission. The five community foundations are:

The Hartford Foundation for Public Giving;
The New Haven Foundation;
The Bridgeport Area Foundation;
The Fairfield County Cooperative Foundation; and
The Pequot Community Foundation (New London).

January 4, 1990

Dr. Maree Sneed from the McKenzie Group attended the fourth meeting. The Commission, led by Dr. Sneed, brainstormed on potential findings concerning racial isolation, quality education and integration. The Commission also discussed a draft outline of the structure of the Commission's final report. The Commission postponed its discussion of Project Concern and Connecticut's alternative schools to a future meeting.

January 14-16, 1990

The co-chairs of the subcommittee on Minority Recruitment and Retention, Mrs. Christina Burnham and Mr. Henry Kelly, attended the fourth annual conference on Recruitment and Retention of Minorities in Teacher Education at the University of Kentucky.

January 16, 1990

The Commission members attended a press conference announcing the $100,000 funding of the Commission's work by a partnership of five community foundations. The press conference was held at the Sound School, a magnet marine science high school in New Haven. Tours of the school were available to the Commission members. After the press conference, the Commission heard a presentation by the Connecticut Education Association (CEA). The CEA showed a video and talked about the activities the CEA is pursuing to call attention to the need for quality and integrated education in Connecticut. After the presentation, the subcommittees held brief meetings.

(continued)

Report of Activities (continued)

February 1, 1990

At its fifth meeting, the Commission reviewed the "findings" developed at the January 4 meeting and proposed a series of new "finding" statements. It was determined that the "findings" would be treated as the problems for which the Commission must find solutions. The Commission discussed at length the definition of quality education and whether one can obtain a quality education without an integrated student body and faculty.

March 1, 1990

The Commission held its sixth meeting. Representative Naomi Cohen and Senator Kevin Sullivan, co-chairs of the Education Committee of the General Assembly, asked the Commission to add to the Commission's charge a review of the current "racial imbalance" statutes and to make recommendations for change. The Commission agreed to review the current statutes and determine if any changes are needed. Dr. Maree Sneed presented a short history of desegregation. A presentation on Project Concern was given by Mary Carroll of the Hartford Public Schools, Maureen Bojko from the Connecticut Department of Education and John Allison from the Capitol Region Education Council. Thomas Brown from the Department of Education gave a presentation on magnet schools in Connecticut.

March 8, 1990

The co-chairs of the Commission meet with G. Donald Ferree of the Institute for Social Inquiry to discuss commissioning a public opinion poll for the Commission.

March 20, 1990

The Commission held a workshop to edit the "findings" and to group them into no more than 10 to 12 topics.

Report of Activities (continued)

March 25-27, 1990

Three members of the Commission, Carol Duggan, Deborah Willard and Michael Helfgott, and one staff member, Carol Rocque, went to St. Paul, Minnesota, and Milwaukee, Wisconsin, to visit the school districts and to hear about the efforts of the two school districts to integrate their schools. In Milwaukee they met Dr. Robert Peterkin, superintendent of schools. Milwaukee is operating under a court settlement agreement involving Milwaukee and 23 suburban communities. In St. Paul, they met with Dr. David Bennett, superintendent of schools. (Dr. Bennett worked in the Milwaukee Public School system when the court settlement was reached.) St. Paul has an extensive school choice program to integrate its schools and is a leader in implementing multicultural education in all its schools.

March 30, 1990

Dr. James Banks, professor of education at the University of Washington, Seattle, spoke to the Commission and guests on "The Nature of Multicultural Education". Professor Banks is internationally known for his work in social studies education and in multicultural education.

The co-chairs, working with the co-chairs of the Interdistrict-Intradistrict Programs subcommittee and staff, reviewed the first draft of the public opinion poll developed by the Institute for Social Inquiry and made suggestions for changes.

April 5, 1990

At their seventh meeting, the Commission members discussed the revised "findings" and agreed to vote on the "findings" at the May meeting. A brief report was given regarding the presentation of Dr. James Banks on March 30, 1990. Dr. Sneed then facilitated a discussion on interdistrict transfer programs and whether the Commission wished to recommend and support the use of such programs to integrate schools in Connecticut. Although the consensus was that a voluntary interdistrict transfer program would be included in the Commission's final report, there were concerns expressed about a number of issues relating to interdistrict transfers. The co-chairs reported on their progress on the development of the public opinion poll. The co-chairs reviewed the second draft of the public opinion poll and agreed to make suggestions for questions to be cut from the draft.

(continued)

Report of Activities (continued)

April 19 - May 7, 1990

The Institute for Social Inquiry conducted the public opinion poll, interviewing 750 adults by phone.

May 10, 1990

The Commission members heard a presentation by Dr. David Hornbeck at their eighth meeting. Dr. Hornbeck, former Maryland state school superintendent, has been instrumental in developing the new Kentucky school reform program. He outlined the major components of the new program.

June 7, 1990

The Commission held its ninth meeting. The Commission voted to adopt a set of five "findings":

1. Every student can learn at high levels.
2. In Connecticut, equal educational opportunity does not yet exist.
3. The quality of education is enhanced by diversity.
4. There is a need for greater parental involvement in schools.
5. Too few educators are prepared by life experience or by professional training to teach a diverse student population and manage cultural diversity in the classroom.

The executive directors from the six regional educational service centers reported on regional cooperative efforts by their RESCs.

The Commission discussed a draft of the first chapter of its final report. The subcommittee on minority recruitment and retention presented its draft recommendations.

July 10, 1990

The tenth meeting was held at the Champion Company in Stamford, Connecticut. The Commission heard a report by G. Donald Ferree on the results of the April public opinion survey. The Commission also received a report on enrollment trends, 1989-1999, by Dr. Hyung Chung of H.C. Planning Associates.

Four superintendents spoke to the Commission on school integration issues and options.

Report of Activities (continued)

August 22, 1990

The Commission heard a panel presentation by five members of local boards of education at its 11th meeting. The board members discussed current integration efforts in their local districts. The Commission discussed, at some length, the strengths and weaknesses of voluntary versus mandatory integration programs. The Commission members agreed that their charge limited their study to voluntary approaches to integration.

September 6, 1990

The Commission held its 12th meeting. The Commission members discussed the impact of housing patterns on school desegregation. The Commission members discussed a draft of their findings, goals and recommendations. The Commission agreed to continue its discussion of the draft report at the next meeting.

October 4, 1990

The Commission held its 13th meeting. The Commission members discussed revisions to their draft report. The Commission also agreed, tentatively, to hold public hearings in mid-November.

November 7, 1990

At their 14th meeting the members continued reviewing and revising their preliminary draft report. The members agreed to reschedule their public hearings to early December to allow more time for public notice of the hearings and for the public to review their preliminary report.

(continued)

Report of Activities (continued)

December 4 and 5, 1990

The Commission held six public hearings across the state to receive public commentary on its preliminary report and recommendations. Hearings were held as follows:

December 4, 1990

Bridgeport: Blackham School; 21 speakers
Hartford: A.I. Prince School; 18 speakers
Winchester: Northwest Regional High School, no speakers

December 5, 1990

Stamford: Turn of River School; 14 speakers
Old Saybrook: Main Street School; 8 speakers
Windham: Eastern Connecticut State University; 9 speakers

December 13, 1990

The Commission held its 15th meeting. The members discussed the public comments at the hearings. The Commission next voted on a series of proposed amendments to the draft report. The Commission then adopted the report as amended. The Commission agreed to meet again to review and adopt a letter of transmittal to Governor O'Neill.

December 20, 1990

At their 16th meeting, after a short discussion, the Commission members voted to accept the proposed letter of transmittal. The Commission next voted to reconsider its adoption of the final report (adopted at the 12/13/90 meeting). The motion to reconsider being approved, the Commission then considered a motion to amend language in the preface to the report. This motion was tabled to a meeting on December 31, 1990, to allow all members the opportunity to review and vote on the proposed amendment.

December 31, 1990

The Commission held its 17th and final meeting. Eleven members were present at the meeting and eight members sent in signed ballots. The Commission amended, then adopted, its final report with 18 voting in favor and 1 opposed. The co-chairs delivered the report to Governor O'Neill.

Appendix B
Survey for the
Governor's Commission on Quality and Integrated Education
Summary of Initial Key Findings

Prepared by G. Donald Ferree, Director
Institute for Social Inquiry
University of Connecticut
July 10, 1990

Introduction

As part of its work, the Governor's Commission on Quality and Integrated Education commissioned the Institute for Social Inquiry (ISI) at the University of Connecticut to conduct a public opinion survey intended to gauge public attitudes to education, integration, and related issues. ISI, working with Commission members, developed the questions, drew the sample, administered the actual survey, and analyzed the results. In this work, the Institute utilized essentially the same methods employed in some 200 other Connecticut-wide studies conducted by ISI since 1979.

The study has a "margin of error" of about plus or minus 4 percent. This means, for percentages around 50 percent, that had every adult resident been asked a question for which 50 percent of the sample fell in a given response category, there is only a one in 20 chance that the results for the entire population of adults would have been higher than 54 percent or lower than 46 percent. The "margin of error" shrinks for percentages much larger or smaller than 50 percent, but increases for subgroups smaller than the entire sample of 750, going up as the square root of the subsample size goes down. Thus, the "margin of error" for subgroups of around 250 is approximately plus or minus 7 percent. Interviews were conducted between April 19 and May 7, 1990.

What follows is an overview of some key initial findings from the study, on which analysis and consultation with the Commission is continuing. Ultimately, a full technical report, included final "marginals" for all questions for the full sample and selected subgroups, will be available and a copy of the data (protecting the identity of individual respondents) will be archived at the ISI-administered Roper Center for Public Opinion Research at the University of Connecticut for further analysis by interested researchers.

Overall Description

As noted, the full sample represented adult residents from throughout the state, and its demographic characteristics approximate the full adult (18 or over) non-institutionalized population. Of particular relevance to what follows are certain subgroups. Just under one-third (242 persons) reported having at least one child 16 or under living with them, of whom the vast bulk (205 respondents) has a child currently in school. Just under nine in ten (660 respondents) were white.

Background Attitudes

Public thinking about issues related to education and integration takes place against a backdrop of overall views of the racial situation in our country. To begin with, most residents live in a world which is at least partially "segregated". Three in four (76%) say that most, or almost all of their personal friends are of the same race as they are, including four in ten who describe their social circle as "almost all of the same race as you". Among whites, nine in ten move in social circles mostly or entirely of their own race, while six in ten minority residents would so describe themselves.

The situation is somewhat different in other milieus in which persons find themselves. Just about half (48%) of all respondents say their work place is mostly of their own race, including half of whites and one in four minority residents. While there is a fair amount of uncertainty about the racial makeup of the student body in the local schools, and even more about the staff, both tend to look somewhat more like the work place, and less like the social circle of respondents.

By comparison, when respondents were asked to reflect on "the schools you attended yourself when you were a child", more than eight in ten (82%) said that setting had been all or mostly of their own race. Thus, schools NOW are seen as more integrated in practice, while the social milieu of most respondents tends to be mono-racial.

Three in four (77%) label "discrimination against blacks and other minorities" as at least a "somewhat serious problem" today in the United States. Whites tend to view the situation as somewhat less pressing, with only one in four calling it "very serious", which label was chosen by half of all nonwhite respondents.

There is a good deal of difference among respondents as to whether discrimination is increasing, decreasing, or remaining roughly constant. Four in ten (42%) believe the situation is staying about the same, while one in three (32%) think it is improving, and one in four (22%) see a worsening. On balance, if they perceive a shift one way or the other, whites think things are getting better; nonwhites think they are getting worse.

There is a clear sense that housing patterns reflect a problem of discrimination, rather than simple individual choice. Half (47%) of all respondents believe minorities are discriminated against "in finding good housing"; one in three (32%) think they are fairly treated; and a handful (4%) think members of minority groups are actually "favored".

School Children

One third of the sample reported having at least one child 16 or younger at home. Of this group, the vast bulk had a child in school, with only about one in ten of them saying that their child(ren) went only to private schools. Six in ten (61%) of school parents reported their children use a bus (at least in part) to get to school, with the typical reported time on the bus between 15 and 20 minutes.

Most parents (three in four) report that they now have no choice about where to send their children to school, although one in five feel they have at least some degree of choice among public schools. Day care is a direct concern of just under one in four (22%) parents overall, and one in six (16%) among parents with children in school. Where day care is provided, it tends to be either a sitter's home, or at a day-care center.

Parents were asked to rate four factors as to their importance in choosing a place to live. Answers showed that — among the limited list — overall quality of life in the community was paramount, followed by quality of the local public schools, and affordable housing. Ease of getting to work brought up the rear of this set of priorities. Overall, among the four, school quality was named as most important (alone or tied with another) by better than one in three (36%) and as least important by only about seven percent of the respondents.

It should be pointed out, however, that respondents were asked only to rank the importance of these factors against each other, not on an absolute scale.

General School Perception

Overall, when respondents were asked to use our standard four-point rating scale ("excellent", "good", "fair", or "poor"), the "public schools in your community" get reasonable, but not sterling marks. One in five (21%) rate them "excellent"; almost twice as many (38%) feel they are doing a "good" job; another one in five (22%) call their performance "fair"; only a handful (6%) think "poor" is more apt. Parents tended to be more willing to make a rating and to be somewhat more positive as well.

When it comes to what respondents most and least liked about their schools, answers covered a wide gamut (and over half of nonparents failed to name anything). There was a general tendency, however, to focus in on quality-related issues, such as number and quality of teachers, breadth of program, and so on. Especially granted the fact that earlier race-related questions might have tended to overstate – if anything – the impact of this factor, it is noteworthy that racial matters scarcely appear as most salient EITHER positively or negatively.

To gauge the importance of various factors in impressions of the schools, interviewers asked respondents to suppose they had their choice of public schools for their children (or were advising a close friend about such a choice). They then presented ten attributes and asked, for each, if it would be "very positive" for parents, "somewhat positive, somewhat negative, very negative, or would not make a difference at all in the choice of school". This made it possible examine both the balance (positive vs. negative) of each attribute and its "salience" (e.g. "very" vs. "somewhat" positive).

Before turning specifically to the factors, some general observations are in order. First, NONE of the attributes mentioned was seen as negative on balance, and with one exception noted below, the fraction seeing each as even somewhat negative hardly exceeded one in ten.

Secondly, the priority of factors remains essentially undisturbed regardless of whether one uses simple balance, some sort of weighted rating of the four possibilities, or only the group which sees it as very positive. Thirdly, the perceptions of those who are actually parents are very similar to those who had no children at home and so would be giving advice. Finally, quality of education is central. This sounds an important theme that runs all through these data.

Factors are discussed in order of their importance, which is not identical to their position in the questionnaire.

At the top of the scale (using the positive perceptions as the criteria) came enrichment, "programs in special areas like computers, the arts or for gifted and talented students", seen as positive by over nine in ten (94%) respondents. Second came another quality issue, "small classes with more individual attention from teachers", which almost as many (92%) labelled as positive. (If one looked solely at the proportion seeing each factor as "very important", these two remain quite close but reverse position.)

Localism continues to be a virtue as well. Eight in ten (83%) labelled "keeping children in the same town they live in" as positive. If one considers only those factors which are "very positive", this rounds out the top three and other factors are clearly of lesser importance.

It may come as something of a surprise that issues of racial balance come next. "Making sure there was a good mix of racial backgrounds" AND "having teachers from a variety of racial backgrounds" were named as positive by three in four (73%) among all respondents. If, as noted, one looks only at "very positive ratings", these factors slip some, but good balance in the staff remains third, and student racial balance comes close behind. These considerations do not outweigh issues of individual quality – and we have not yet discussed whether they are seen as competing with quality or fostering it – but the key is that THEY ARE GOOD IN THEMSELVES.

Two areas related to broadening the mandate of schools for younger children come next. Seven in ten (70%) see "day care before and after regular school hours" as positive, and about six in ten (61%) so view "programs for children too young for kindergarten".

At the bottom of the priority ladder, although still viewed net positively, come three final factors. Each is interesting in itself and in comparison to the factors already discussed, each is labelled as positive by just over half (between 54% and 56%) of respondents generally.

While keeping children in their home towns – and thereby close to home – was quite positive, "having your child attend a school near or at your place of work" was decidedly less so. Among parents this was the factor receiving the smallest number of either "somewhat" or "very" positive mentions; if one looks only at the proportion saying this factor was "very positive", it was close to the bottom.

The flip side of diversity may be a concern lest one's child be in a small minority. However, "making sure your children are NOT (emphasis in original) in a small racial minority" is not as positive as achieving a good mix. Parents did tend to accord this factor a bit more importance than did nonparents, especially if one looks only at "very positive" ratings. Still, the fact that this is relatively very low on the ladder may come as something of a surprise, especially granted that it is an "easy" way to voice concern about integration.

The one area which has a notable number of people saying it was negative (although still leaving a net positive impression) was "giving children the chance to experience a different sort of community from the one they live in". Overall just over half (54%) saw this as a positive, but one in four (24%) felt it was negative. Focusing on the extreme ratings, this factor comes up at the bottom as well, although "very positive" was chosen by three times as many as chose "very negative" (24% compared to 8%) among all respondents.

Integration "per se"

At this point, the questionnaire turned more explicitly to issues directly related to integration of the public schools. To begin with, granted all the media attention to one or another facet of this matter over the past few years, it may be noteworthy that only half (47%) of the population claims to have "heard or read anything in the news about racial balance in Connecticut schools". Parents were scarcely different from nonparents. Perhaps this, coupled with earlier observations about quality, should remind one to be cautious about overestimating the salience of balance per se in the public mind.

Respondents generally believe that any impact of integration itself ON MINORITY STUDENTS is positive. Half (52%) believe that racial integration "improves education for blacks and other minorities", while only one in ten (10%) think it worsens their education. Three in ten (29%) see no difference.

What about students from the majority? Fewer see an impact. One half (47%) of all respondents believe racial integration of the public schools makes no difference in either direction, but if there is an impact it is positive. Just under one in three (31%) think integration betters whites' education, twice as large as the group (15%) which believes it worsens it.

An interesting comparison arises from the racial backgrounds of the respondents. Whites are clearly more convinced than those from minority groups that integration helps minority students. Nonwhites are more convinced than whites that it helps white students.

The general climate toward "integration" is positive. When respondents were asked whether more or less should be done "to integrate schools in your community", one in four (25%) felt there should be no change, but those who believe more should be done (42%) outnumbered those who felt that less should be (18%) by more than two to one. As would be expected, nonwhites were more eager than whites, but fewer than one in five (18%) of the latter group want to see reductions.

However, a follow-up question makes another value clear. Those wanting at least a maintaining of current efforts (i.e., either feeling more should be done or that existing efforts were adequate) were asked, "should the efforts to increase integration be voluntary for parents or should the town require them?" Voluntary efforts were endorsed (39% compared to 17%) two to one.

There is stronger support in principle for doing more "to integrate schools throughout the state of Connecticut". Just over half (54%) called for more effort, one in five (19%) wanted less, and the remainder (12%) felt no change was necessary. As before, parents are not very different from nonparents, and while minority respondents backed increased effort more strongly, respondents from the white majority clearly favored them on balance as well.

Here again, though less strongly than when the focus was local, the voluntary dimension is important. By roughly a three-to-two margin (35% compared to 21%), those wanting more or continued effort at the statewide level felt "efforts [should] be voluntary" rather than that "the state [should] require these efforts". What both of these series of questions suggest is that there is a good deal of potential support for new effort, but that much of it could be jeopardized as coercive aspects are seen as more apparent.

Going along with this, and the earlier noted concern for localism, the idea of "regional schools with special quality educational programs — so-called magnet schools — in order to achieve school integration" wins support by about a five to three (47%-30%) margin. Parents are at least as positive as nonparents, but there is a sharp racial difference. While both whites and nonwhites favor this idea, nonwhites are more clearly in support.

One perhaps surprising result occurred in response to the question, "Do you think integration should begin with the elementary schools, middle or junior high schools, or with high school?" To be sure, a small group of just under one in ten (8%) volunteered the answer that no integration was needed at all, but the most common answer, voiced by fully eight in ten (80%), was that integration should begin at the elementary level.

Efforts at integration are NOT seen by everyone as wholly new. While the largest group, some four in ten (40%) of all respondents, believes their town is not "involved in any voluntary programs to bring about school integration", and almost as many (38%) do not know, just over one in five (22%) think their town is now doing something in this field.

The level of professed nonawareness is much higher among nonparents than among parents, and somewhat higher among whites than it is among nonwhite respondents; the absolute size of the group which says their town is now doing something voluntary to achieve integration is constant across the demographic distinctions we have been examining.

There are conflicting values at work here. Consistent with what we have earlier discussed, almost nine in ten (88%) agreed that "children should normally go to the schools closest to their homes", and two-thirds (66%) strongly felt so. (Recall the earlier sense that housing discrimination is real and would affect the consequences of this principle for racial balance.) While whites were more in favor of this idea than nonwhites, the racial difference here is quite a small one.

At the same time, seven in ten (70%) agree that "making sure a school is racially and culturally mixed improves the quality of education for all students". Four in ten (41%) strongly agree with this. Nonwhites are more convinced that whites, and the difference on this question is more clear than on the previous one. And, of course, these two values can well conflict.

A third value is endorsed with a strength midway between these two. Eight in ten (80%) agree at least somewhat that "parents should always have a final choice of where their children go to school", a sentiment that finds six in ten (60%) in strong agreement. Illustrating the power of the voluntary principle, nonwhites are at least as supportive of this idea, and marginally more so.

Almost two in three (63%) agree that "children who go to one-race schools will be at a disadvantage when they grow up and must live and work in our multiracial society", with four in ten (39%) strongly agreeing. As before, nonwhites are more convinced than whites, but this "factual" dimension underscores a major argument for integration in the schools even if for non-directly-instructional purposes.

This is furthered by results to the question whether "if more children went to racially mixed schools, we would have less of a problem with racial prejudice". Results were similar. Two thirds (68%) agreed, including four in ten (40%) who did so strongly. Racial patterns are similar as well. It should be noted that an even larger percentage, some eight in ten (78%), agreed with at least one of these notions of positive societal impact.

The quality dimension, however, is vital. If results to this point have not made that clear, the immediately following question should. Three in four (74%) agreed that "it is more important to improve the QUALITY (emphasis in original) of schools that minority children go to than it is to get better racial balance in the schools". Both white and minority-group respondents take similar stands.

Achieving Racial Balance

What all this means is that there are (partially conflicting) values at play here, and it is evident that racial balance is secondary to quality if they conflict, but is seen by many as complementing quality (both in terms of instruction and broader preparation for life). What of the schemes to achieve better balance for all the various purposes?

First of all, the seriousness of the problem is perceived as less great than the more general problem of racial discrimination. Six in ten (61%) said, after being reminded that there was racial imbalance in SOME of the schools in Connecticut, that this represented at least somewhat of a problem. However, this group included only about one in seven (15%) who saw it as a serious problem. Nonwhites were slightly more concerned than whites, but only a quarter of the former group (23%) thought it was very serious.

On the other hand, three in four (73%) said that "if there IS racial imbalance in the schools in part of the state", then "towns in the area [should] cooperate to solve the problem". It should be noted that this question deliberately stressed cooperation and the idea that solutions OUGHT to transcend districts without keying specifically on the issue of voluntary vs. mandatory efforts. At the least, though, this represents a predisposition that if, empirically, there is racial imbalance, one's community should not take an "ostrich" approach to it.

Support was lower when it came to another question: "Should the state government provide financial incentives to school districts to accept students from other districts for purposes of integration?" On the one hand, this involves state involvement, and moreover – in a bad fiscal time – financial (i.e., tax) involvement. On the other, it clearly at least hints at transporting students across district boundaries, which we have seen is not much of a positive value in itself. In any event, this idea is endorsed by a relatively lukewarm five to three (50% to 33% margin), with nonwhites notably more favorable.

The last two substantive questions on the survey dealt explicitly with "busing". When respondents were asked baldly, "Would you favor or oppose the busing of minority and white students to achieve school integration?", the public – which above has so often voiced support for some of the rationale for this step – turns it down by a five to three (54%-32%) margin. Nonwhites narrowly favor it; whites clearly do not.

The importance of quality is sharply underscored by a follow-up question, put to all those except the respondents who favored busing in the abstract. "If busing worked so that white children were bused to quality schools in minority neighborhoods and minority children were bused to quality schools in white neighborhoods, would you favor or oppose busing to achieve racial balance?" This results in a virtual tie, with just under half favoring busing (44%), a similar number (45%) opposing it, and one in eight (12%) saying it depended or otherwise not expressing an opinion.

"Busing" as a symbol is clearly not a positive one, conjuring up images of "court-ordered", conflict-fraught community conflict. It would certainly be a mistake to interpret these data to mean the public favors busing in and of itself. But the key is a means to desired ends.

Comparing those who favor busing to those who oppose it yields a consistent picture. Those who favor it are more concerned with discrimination as a problem, and are sharply more likely to think minorities experience housing discrimination.

The groups do NOT differ sharply on what is important in choosing a town to live in, or in the ratings of the local schools, but those favoring busing do see racial balance as a more attractive factor than those who oppose busing, while the opposite pattern holds for the balance of "local" and "cosmopolitan" experiences. Emphasizing the importance of busing as a means to an end, those favoring busing are much more likely to believe both education and overall race relations will be enhanced by racial balance than those who oppose it. Further, they are more likely to favor efforts to achieve racial balance in general.

On the value-related questions, those favoring and those opposing busing tend – on balance – to come down on the same side, but with clearly differing intensity. Thus, for example, both agree that children should go to the closest school AND that racial and cultural mixing improves education, but on the former question those opposed to busing take a much stronger view, while on the latter it is those who favor busing whose opinion is more one sided and sharply felt.

This pattern continues when it comes to the seriousness of racial imbalance – both groups say it is a problem, but those favoring busing take it much more seriously. Almost all of those who favor busing (91%) also support the desirability of cooperative efforts to address the problem, but only six in ten (57%) of those who oppose busing do so.

All of this helps to make clear that racial balance is seen as a positive thing, which CAN enhance education (both narrowly and broadly defined). BUT achieving such balance has costs, which may conflict with other values. The public sees little value in achieving numerical balance which may not help education and which treats students as members of classes. "Busing" itself continues to have a severe image problem. Reception of any program will depend very much on how it balances these (at least partially conflicting) values, but there IS a potential broad support for responsible means for achieving "quality AND integrated" education.

Appendix C

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